
A

Weekly Review

O F T H E

Affairs of *FRANCE*:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *Newsp-
Writers* and *Petty-Statesmen*, of all Sides.

Saturday, Feb. 26. 1704.

HAVING in our last given the Reader a Scheme of part of the Design of this Paper, and begun to Treat of the Present Greatness of the *French* Nation: 'Tis necessary, to explain what I mean by the Greatness of the *French*, to prove the Matter of Fact, and descend a little to Particulars.

The Condition the *French* were in formerly, will come in Course to be Treated of, in the Historical part of this Paper, and I therefore purposely omit it here, being resolv'd to avoid the Tautologies and Impertinences I reprove in other People.

I thought it was needless to premise, that a true Map of the *French* Greatness, rightly considered, is far from the Appearance of a design to Magnifie our Enemies, and Lessen or Discourage our Friends.

B

They

They will make a much better Improvement of our Account of the *French* Greatness, who quicken their Preparations, and double their Endeavours. The *French* are highly improv'd : But I have no where pretended, and indeed never Thought the *French* were invincible.

Nor are the Forces of the *French* really Superiour to the Confederacy ; no, not tho' you take the *French* in Conjunction with their present Alliances.

But the Advantage the *French* have over the rest of *Europe*, consists in an Article, which I wish the Confederate Princes would take into Serious Consideration. I am not setting up to Dictate to my Superiours, nor I believe will any-body think me Impertinent, in saying, the *French* out-do us all in the following Particulars,

- I. In the Unanimity and Policy of their Councils.
- II. In the Exactness and Punctual Execution of their Orders.
- III. In the Swiftmess of their Motiqa.
- IV. In the Fidelity of their Officers.

I might be excus'd from enlarging on these Particulars, and refer the Reader to our General Unhappy Experience in the Past and Present Age.

The Proverb, That *all the French Fools are dead*, begins to grow old ; 'tis so many Years since the Policy of their Government has been so remarkable, as has given *Europe* just Apprehensions of their Power.

To go back for this, we need search no farther than the Reign of Henry IV. who having Subdued the Catholick League, beaten the *Spaniards* out of *France*, re-taken *Amiens*, and concluded the Peace of *Vervins*, [*Things we shall have an occasion to give particular Account of, in the process of these Papers,*] his Reign as a truly Victorious Prince, may be Dated from that Time.

As every thing proceeded Prosperously with him, he had both Leisure and Encouragement to Alter, Settle and Study the Amendment of his Civil Government ; and as he had a Genius for Government beyond all the Princes that ever went before him, he laid the Foundation of the Present *Oeconomy*, he began that Encroachment on the Nobility and Privileges of the *French* Nation, which has by the Policy of Succeeding Princes.

ces been carry'd on, and by Accomplish'd Management of the Present King, been brought to an Absolute Conquest.

Henry IV. had not only brought his Civil Government to a Foot of Management, Agreeable to his own Method, but being of a most Aspiring Temper, and Particularly qualified both for the Contriving as well as Executing Vast and Inimitable Designs; he found in his Thoughts the Scheme of an Universal Monarchy, and brought himself to such a Mastership of his Prodigious Designs, as that he firmly resolv'd to put them in Execution, and was often heard to say, He did not Question, if he liv'd 20 Years, but he would be King of all the World, that 'twas worth his while to Conquer.

To this End, being in full Peace, and Commanding a Rich, Plentiful and Populous Nation; he began to Amass to himself Prodigious Treasures, and to lay up incredible Magazines of Warlike Stores; and was intending to take a vast Army of *Swiss, Scots, and German* Soldiers into his Pay.

I have seen several Draughts of his Prodigious Designs; but whether they have good Authority or not, I cannot determine: But the most Probable, was this which follows, as seeming to me most suitable to the Majesty of his Mind, and the vast Genius he was Master of.

He design'd to have 400000 Men in Arms, all Veterane Troops, which he had divided in this Manner; with two Armies, 50000 Men each, he design'd to Attack *Spain*, one by *Navarr*, and the other from the side of *Languedoc*; and propos'd in one Summer to Penetrate into the Center of the Kingdom; he design'd with 70000 Men to dispossess the *Spaniards* in *Italy*; he had form'd two large Armies to Attack the Low-Countries; and with 100000 Men he resolv'd in Person to fall upon the Emperor: Nay, so certainly had he propos'd these Conquests to himself, that he had contriv'd after the House of *Austria*, that is, the *Spaniard* and *German* Empire was Subdu'd, in what manner, and with what Forces to fall upon the *Turks*, whom he question'd not in two Campaigns to drive out of *Europe*, and burn *Constantinople* about their Ears.

In the middle of these vast Designs, and the very Spring before, he had resolv'd to begin with the *Spaniard*, he was Assassinated in his Coach, and stabb'd with a Dagger by *Ravilliac*, and died without speaking one word; of all which we shall give a more succinct Account in the Process of this Paper.

It is observable, that in all his prodigious Conquests, he never had any Design upon *England*, which I cannot attribute to his Gratitude to the *English* Nation, as some judicious Authors have noted; but it seems probable to me, that he saw it was impracticable for him, for want of a Naval Force, which he neither had himself, nor was the whole World capable at that time to furnish him.

Ambitious Princes have here an Extraordinary Lesson, and may instruct themselves in the Doctrines of Moderation. Very just Reflections might also be made here of the Vanity of Human Contrivance, and the frequent Occasions in which Providence thinks fit to show its Sovereignty over the Actions of Men.

But these are Speculations more proper for the Pen of the Learned, and not at all concern'd in the present Design.

From the Measures and Government of this Great Prince began the extraordinary Conduct of the *French* Affairs.

In the Reign of his Son, they were pursued by the most exquisite Master of Politicks, Cardinal *Richlieu*, whose Life and Management may hereafter take up a considerable part of these Papers. This great Minister made the Reign of a weak Prince exceedingly glorious. Ever since the Death of *Hen. IV.* the *French* Affairs have been under the most exact Conduct in the Hands of the most refined Statef-men in the World; together with two Queens of most admirable Management, Women of uncommon Spirits as to Government, and most incomparable Politicks. Among these Statef-men are reckon'd the Cardinals *Richlieu* and *Mazarine*, *Moneur Colbert*, *Lovois*, *Ponchartrain*, &c.

These are the Steps of Policy, by which the *French* has risen to that Prodigy which now the whole World wonders at. The Methods of their Military Greatness I yet reserve, as a Subject which will come too often in our way.

But I cannot pass over these Observations, without taking a View of the present Posture of the *French* Affairs, as an Effect of their most exact Management; and this I shall confine to two Particulars.

- I. The Management of the last Campaign.
- II. The Prospect of the next.

First

First, the Management of the last Campaign the Allies seem'd to have the Advantage of the *French*, during the greatest part of the Summer. The *French* and *Bavarians* were kept at Bay, by Prince *Lewis* of *Baden*, till the Beginning of *September*; the Elector of *Bavaria* had made a fruitless Attempt upon *Tirol*, and the Duke de *Vendosme* the like upon *Trent*, and both return'd with Blows and Dishonour. Prince *Lewis* of *Baden* had circumvented the *French* in a most prodigious March of 200 Miles, and got into *Augsburgh* before them. The Duke of *Marlborough* carried all before him in *Flanders*.

But now, observe the Policy of our Petty State-men: We rallied and banter'd Prince *Lewis*, and our Dialoguers made themselves merry with his Gouty Toes; some would be witty upon the Subject, and tell us his whole Army had got the Govt; and that lying in a Place, and doing nothing, was his particular Talent and his way of making War.

But had that Politick General maintain'd his Camp, and not separated his Army, tho' he had done nothing to this Hour, he had prevented the Misfortunes which follow'd; the *French* joining all their Forces with a Secresie and Celerity, peculiar to that Nation, fall upon Count *Stirum*, and give him a Total Defeat.

Our News-Papers are immediately fill'd with the Gallantry of the *Germans*, and how brave a Retreat they made, how many *Frenchmen* they kill'd; but suppose it all true, and more, the *French* got the Victory, and they never trouble themselves with what it cost them, 'tis the Effects of a Victory they aim at. Then our News-mongers tell us of Count *Stirum* receiving a new Train of Artillery, new Baggage and Stores, and every day he was to march again, and attack the *French*: Woe be to the *French*, if 'twas as easie to beat them as our News-writers make it; but the Fruits of this Victory are plain, Count *Stirum* has never struck a Stroke, since Prince *Lewis* has been forc'd to abandon *Augsburg*, and leave them to the mercy of the exasperated Enemy. And the next News we hear, the Imperial Army is put into Winter Quarters; the Generals fall out, and the Prince gone home to visit his Lady.

The *Germans* having thus ended the Campaign; now was the time for the *French* to begin. *Brisac*, one of the most invincible Towns in *Europe*, fell into their Hands in 11 days, which once before held out against an Army of 50000 Men, under Duke

Duke *Bernhard of Saxe Weymar* above 8 Months. The *French* seize *Augsburgh*, the *Bavarians*, *Pessan*, insult the Emperor within 40 Leagues of his Imperial Palace; and raise vast Contributions in the Hereditary Provinces.

In *Alsace* they begin an Expedition into the Palatinate, and form the Siege of *Landau*, after all our Wars were over in *Flanders*, and the Confederates gone to rest: This City fell into their Hands with a double Misfortune, *viz.* the Defeat of the Brave Prince of *Hesse Castel*, detach'd with an unsuitable Force to relieve it.

The Ravages made, the Towns taken, the Victories won, at the End of a Campaign; what Boast among Men, what Thanksgivings to God, what Triumphs, what Holidays should we have had for them, and how many Campaigns must we suppose to have time to recover in.

These are *French* Managements, these are the Effects of exact Conduct, and vigorous Execution of unanimous Councils.

The extraordinary Conduct of the *French* as to managing the Courts of Princes, bringing them over to their Interest, and bringing them off from their own, deserves no small Remark in these Papers: And tho' I design to come to a larger and more exact Account of these matters in the farther Prosecution of this Design; yet I cannot omit that there are some of the greatest Master-pieces of Management visible in the Affairs of *France* that can in any Age be parallel'd.

'Tis sometimes to be hop'd for to open Princes Eyes, and bring them to an Understanding of their true Interest, and this is a work proves oftentimes difficult enough, and we value our selves very much upon it.

But how many times have we found the *French* prevail upon Princes to forsake their Friends, the Interest of their Governments, and their own apparent Advantages, to espouse his Interest? This must be by a Fineness of Management peculiar to the *French*, and no Nation in the World can shew such Instances they.

They have brought Men, especially Princes, to forsake their Honour, their Gratitude, their Subjects, and their own Interests, for theirs.

The Examples I purpose to bring upon the Stage in this Case, are such as these.

The

The Duke of *Savoy*, who most certainly was deluded by the *French*, to desert his Faith, and Confederacy, and Honour to the Emperor and his Confederates, and to sacrifice his Friends, and his Interest, to the *French*; for which he received the Feather in his Cap of making his Daughters *Queens*, one of whom he is willing to desert already, to make satisfaction for so fatal a mistake; and this was all he got, and of which he now repents: for doubtless all the loss he obtain'd by the Treaty with the *French*, he had had by the Peace of *Ryswick* and much more.

The Elector of *Cologne*, the Duke of *Bavaria*, and the Duke of *Mantua*, are other Instances, and perhaps we may find some at home; all which I refer to the farther prosecution of these Papers.

We shall refer the Prospect of the next Campaign to another time; and we desire the Reader to adjourn their Censure of this way of extolling the *French*, till they see the Inferences we shall draw, and the Conclusions we shall desire them to make from the whole; and then, if they find Cause, they are welcome.

Mercure Scandale :

O R,

ADVICE from the Scandalous CLUB.

Translated out of *French*.

THIS Society is a Corporation long since established in *Paris*, and we cannot compleat our Advices from *France*, without entertaining the World with every thing we meet with from that Country.

And, tho' Corresponding with the Queen's Enemies is prohibited; yet since the Matter will be so honest, as only to tell the World of what every body will own to be scandalous, we reckon we shall be welcome.

This

This Corporation has been set up some Months, and open'd their first Sessions about last *Bartholomew* Fair; but having not yet obtain'd a Patent, they have never, till now, made their Resolves publick.

The Business of this Society is to censure the Actions of Men, not of Parties, and in particular, those Actions which are made publick so by the Authors, as to be, in their own Nature, an Appeal to the general Approbation.

They do not Design to expose Persons but Things; and of them, none but such as more than ordinarily deserve it; they who would not be censur'd by this Assembly, are desired to act with caution enough, not to fall under their Hands; for they resolve to treat Vice, and Villanous Actions, with the utmost Severity.

The First considerable Matter that came before this Society, was about *Bartholomew* Fair; but the Debates being long, they were at last adjourned to the next Fair, when we suppose it will be decided; so being not willing to trouble the World with any thing twice over, we refer that to next *August*.

On the 10th of *September* last, there was a long Hearing, before the Club, of a Fellow that said he had kill'd the Duke of *Bavaria*. Now, as *David* punish'd the Man that said he had kill'd King *Saul*, whether it was so or no, 'twas thought this Fellow ought to be delivered up to Justice, tho' the Duke of *Bavaria* was alive.

Upon the whole, 'twas voted a scandalous Thing, That Newf-Writers shou'd kill Kings and Princes, and bring them to life again at pleasure; and to make an Example of this Fellow, he was dismiss'd, upon Condition he should go to the Queen's-bench once a Day, and bear *Fuller*, his Brother of the Faculty, Company two Hours for fourteen Days together; which cruel Punishment was executed with the utmost Severity.

The Club has had a great deal of trouble about the Newf-Writers, who have been continually brought before them for their ridiculous Stories, and imposing upon Mankind; and tho' the Proceedings have been pretty tedious, we must give you the trouble of a few of them in our next.

Printed for the *Booksellers* of London and
Westminster. 1704.